DISTRICT OFFICE
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DISTRICT40@COUNCIL.NYC.GOV

THE COUNCIL
OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK
RITA C. JOSEPH
COUNCIL MEMBER, 40TH DISTRICT, BROOKLYN

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October 29, 2026

By Electronic Mail

Chief Executive Officer Sheldon McLeod
NYC Health + Hospitals/Kings County
451 Clarkson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11203

Re: Suspension of Nurse Practitioner Sarah Dowd

Chief Executive Officer Sheldon McLeod:

I am writing to urge you to immediately reinstate New York State Nurses Association (NYSNA) Nurse Practitioner (NP) Sarah Dowd at Kings County Hospital. NP Dowd is strong NYSNA leader and key healthcare provider at Kings County.

I have learned that on October 9th NP Dowd, a vice president of the local bargaining unit, was suspended without pay for advocating for patient safety and discussing documented and longstanding staffing concerns at the hospital.

This suspension is unfair. It is a violation of nurses' rights. Advocating for patient safety and discussing staffing concerns are both protected union activity and suspending a NYSNA member for engaging in those discussions with coworkers is union busting.

Nurses are calling on management to respect the staffing standards outlined in their collective bargaining agreement. It is deeply disdaining that the suspended nurse leader was targeted for raising real concerns about the disregard H+H has for the contract they agreed to, and the guidelines set out by New York's safe staffing law.

Again, I urge you to immediately reinstate Nurse Dowd and to take all required steps to ensure Kings County Hospital is adhering to the safe staffing standards outlined in the collective bargaining agreement.

Sincerely,

Rita C. Joseph, District 40

CHAIRMAN
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SENATOR
ZELLNOR Y. MYRIE
20TH SENATE DISTRICT

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MYRIE@NYSENATE.GOV

Sheldon McLeod, Chief Executive Officer
NYC Health + Hospitals/Kings County
451 Clarkson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11203

Dear Mr. McLeod, October 28th, 2026

I am writing to urge you to immediately consider reinstating Nurse Practitioner Sarah Dowd at Kings County Hospital.

I have learned that on October 9th NP Dowd, a vice president of the local union's bargaining unit, was suspended without pay for advocating for patient safety and discussing staffing concerns at the hospital.

This suspension appears to be a potential violation of her right to advocate for patient safety and discuss staffing concerns.

My office has heard from nurses that are asking for management to abide by the staffing standards outlined in the collective bargaining agreement. I am concerned that NP Dowd's suspension is either the result of, or gives the appearance that she was targeted for raising material concerns about H+H's compliance with their contractual obligations and New York's safe staffing law.

I urge you to immediately consider reinstating Nurse Dowd and to take all required steps to ensure Kings County Hospital is adhering to the safe staffing standards outlined in the collective bargaining agreement and the New York Safe Staffing law.

Sincerely,

Zellnor Y. Myrie
New York State Senator
Senate District 20

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

BRIAN A. CUNNINGHAM
Assemblymember 43rd District

COMMITTEES
Agriculture
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Energy

MEMBER
Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic and Asian Legislative Caucus

October 26, 2026
Hospital Leadership
NYC Health + Hospitals/Kings County
Re: Safe Staffing, Patient Safety, and Suspension of a Nurse Leader

Dear Kings County Hospital Leadership:

I write to express serious concern regarding the staffing issues raised by New York State Nurses Association members at Kings County Hospital and the reported suspension without pay of a nurse practitioner who serves as vice president of the local bargaining unit.

Kings County is an essential institution for the families I represent in the 43rd Assembly District. Our community depends on its healthcare professionals, and those professionals deserve the staffing, resources, and support necessary to deliver quality care.

According to NYSNA, the nurse leader was suspended on October 9 after advocating for patient safety and discussing longstanding staffing concerns with coworkers. These reports raise troubling questions about whether nurses can speak openly about conditions affecting their patients without fear of retaliation. I urge hospital leadership to lift the suspension, restore the nurse's pay, and work with NYSNA to resolve this matter promptly and fairly.

I also request that Kings County leadership address the underlying staffing concerns through meaningful engagement with frontline nurses. This should include reviewing adherence to staffing standards in the collective bargaining agreement and applicable state requirements, identifying persistent shortages, and establishing a clear corrective plan with measurable timelines.

Specifically, I request a written response addressing:

1. The basis for the suspension and the process available for its review, consistent with employee privacy protections.
2. The hospital's response to the staffing concerns raised by NYSNA, including steps to address vacancies and recurring staffing shortfalls.
3. The measures leadership will take to ensure employees can raise patient safety and staffing concerns without retaliation.
4. A timeline for meeting with NYSNA representatives and my office to discuss these concerns and a path forward.

Please provide a response within 10 business days of receipt of this letter.

I recognize the pressures facing our public hospital system and remain committed to advocating for the resources Kings County needs. That commitment includes standing with the nurses and healthcare professionals whose work sustains this institution every day. Protecting their ability to advocate for patients strengthens the hospital and the community it serves.

Thank you for your prompt attention. I look forward to working with hospital leadership and NYSNA to support safe staffing, fair treatment, and quality care for our neighbors.

Sincerely,

Brian A. Cunningham
Member, New York State Assembly
43rd Assembly District

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EMAIL: cunninghamba@nyassembly.gov

PHARA SOUFFRANT FORREST
Assemblywoman 57th District
Brooklyn, NY

THE ASSEMBLY STATE
OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

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Task Force on New Americans

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Consumer Affairs and Protection
Higher Education
Health
Insurance
Social Services

October 27, 2026

Sheldon McLeod
Chief Executive Officer, Kings County Hospital
451 Clarkson Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11203

Dear Mr. McLeod,

I have learned that on October 9 Nurse Practitioner Sarah Dowd, a vice president of the local bargaining unit, was suspended without pay for advocating for patient safety and discussing documented and longstanding staffing concerns at the hospital. **I am writing to urge you to immediately reinstate NP Dowd.**

Advocating for patient safety and discussing staffing concerns are both protected union activities. Suspending a NYSNA member for engaging in those discussions with coworkers is unfair and a violation of nurses' rights. It sends a chilling message to other nurses and healthcare providers that the hospital does not take their rights and concerns seriously.

Nurses are calling on management to respect the staffing standards outlined in their collective bargaining agreement. As a nurse myself, I know the importance of safe staffing and the need for nurses to be able to advocate for their contract. Again, I urge you to immediately reinstate Nurse Practitioner Dowd and to take all required steps to ensure that Kings County Hospital is adhering to the safe staffing standards outlined in the collective bargaining agreement.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Phara Souffrant Forrest
NYS Assemblywoman, 57th District

ALBANY OFFICE: Room 731, Legislative Office Building, Albany, New York 12248 • 518-455-5325, FAX: 518-455-3684
DISTRICT OFFICE: Shirley A. Chisholm State Office Building, 55 Hanson Place, Room 328, Brooklyn, New York 11217 • 718-596-0100, FAX: 718-596-4992 EMAIL: souffrantforrestp@nyassembly.gov

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COMMITTEE MEMBER
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HOUSING, CONSTRUCTION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
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PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTS

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK

JABARI BRISPORT
SENATOR, 25TH DISTRICT

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FAX: (718) 237-4137

E-MAIL: BRISPORT@NYSENATE.GOV

Date: October 29, 2026

To CEO Sheldon McLeod:
H+H/Kings County Hospital

I have learned that on October 9th, Nurse Practitioner Sarah Dowd, a vice president of the local bargaining unit at Kings County Hospital, was suspended without pay for advocating for patient safety and discussing documented and longstanding staffing concerns at the hospital.

I am writing to urge you to immediately reinstate NYNSA Nurse Practitioner Sarah Dowd at Kings County Hospital.

Advocating for patient safety and discussing staffing concerns are both protected union activities. This suspension is unfair, retaliatory, and indicative of union busting.

It is deeply concerning that the suspended nurse leader was targeted for raising real concerns about H+H's compliance with both the contract they agreed to and with New York's safe staffing law. Again, I urge you to immediately reinstate Nurse Dowd and to take all required steps to ensure Kings County Hospital is adhering to the safe staffing standards outlined in the collective bargaining agreement.

Best,

Jabari Brisport

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THE COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK
FARAH N. LOUIS
COUNCIL MEMBER · 45TH DISTRICT · BROOKLYN

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EDUCATION
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TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

October 30, 2026

Sheldon P. McLeod
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
NYC Health + Hospitals/Kings County
451 Clarkson Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11203

Dear Mr. McLeod,

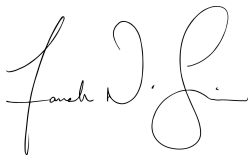
I write to express my strong opposition to the suspension of NYSNA Nurse Practitioner Sarah Dowd at Kings County Hospital. On October 9th, Nurse Dowd, vice president of the local bargaining unit, was suspended without pay for advocating for patient safety and discussing documented and longstanding staffing concerns at the hospital.

Patients deserve the best possible care from hospitals, and Nurse Dowd's priority was to ensure that her hospital gave adequate care. The fact that Nurse Dowd went to work on her day off to check on her co-workers speaks tremendously of her character, as she worked to raise concerns about patient safety and chronic understaffing.

Advocating for patient safety and discussing staffing concerns are both protected by union activity. Nurse Dowd should not be penalized for her compassion, concern, and courage. It is shameful that Kings County Hospital would punish a nurse for doing her job: caring about the lives of patients and the medical professionals. I feel absolute disdain that Health + Hospitals would completely disgrace the contract they agreed to and New York State staffing laws.

I strongly urge you to immediately reinstate Nurse Dowd and take all the necessary steps to ensure Kings County Hospital adheres to safe staffing standards outlined in the collective bargaining agreement.

Sincerely,



Farah N. Louis
New York City Council Member, District 45